



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

ICE deports 242 criminal aliens and immigration violators from Houston

HOUSTON — The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office here yesterday deported 242 criminal aliens and immigration violators who had received final orders of deportation from federal immigration judges.

Early in the morning, ICE buses transported the aliens from their detention facilities to Bush International Airport, where they were flown to their countries of origin. The group included 74 Honduran nationals and 36 Guatemalan nationals with violent criminal records and immigration violations. They flew in government aircraft via the Justice Prisoner and Alien Transportation System (JPATS), which is operated by the U.S. Marshals Service.



Later that afternoon, ICE officers bused another 132 Mexican nationals to the southern border, escorted them across the international bridge, and turned them over to Mexican authorities.

Many of the Central Americans and Mexican nationals deported yesterday had criminal histories that included: murder, drug possession, aggravated assault, larceny, burglary, sexual assault of a minor, gang activity, and armed robbery. Many violent criminals from Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico had been transferred to ICE custody after they served prison terms in state or federal facilities. Others had been apprehended by ICE National Fugitive Operations Program officers (NFOP). Some of the deportees were non-criminal aliens who had ignored an immigration judge's final orders of deportation.

"We want to ensure that these violent criminals are deported and don't seek refuge in our communities," said Field Office Director Kenneth L. Landgrebe. "We will use every available tool to rid our communities of these violent criminals living among us, and who ignore U.S. laws."

With over 590,000 immigration absconders nationwide, ICE is committed to locating and removing these fugitives. ICE established a national Law Enforcement Service Center (LESC) two years ago to ensure that all tips or other local, state and federal law enforcement agencies could call this central database center for information on people in custody.

These deportations are part of the Secure Border Initiative (SBI), a comprehensive multi-year plan by the Department of Homeland Security to secure America's borders and reduce illegal migration. Under SBI, Homeland Security seeks to gain operational control of both the northern and southern borders, while re-engineering the detention and removal system to ensure that illegal aliens are removed from the country quickly and efficiently. SBI also involves strong interior enforcement efforts, including enhanced worksite enforcement investigations and intensified efforts to track down and remove illegal aliens inside this country.

Anyone entering the United States after being deported could face up to 20 years in federal prison.

ICE encourages the public to report suspicious activity by calling the ICE toll-free hotline: 1-866-DHS-2ICE.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.